



United States Department of State
Washington, D.C. 20520

January 09, 2012

Mr. Michael Morisy
MuckRock News
DEPT MRT 942/ P.O. Box 55819
Boston, MA 02205-5819

RE: Any records prepared by State and sent to Congress concerning the proposed Stop Online Piracy Act

Dear Mr. Morisy:

This is in response to your request dated **December 27, 2011**. We have assigned Case Control Number **F-2011-27678** and will begin the processing of your request based upon the information provided in your communication.

The cut-off date is the date the search is initiated unless you have provided a specific timeframe.

We have considered your request of a fee waiver. A waiver or reduction of fees may be appropriate when the disclosure of records is in the public interest because the disclosure is likely to contribute significantly to public understanding of the operations or activities of the Government and is not primarily in the interest of the requester. *See* 22 C.F.R. § 171.17. In light of the information supplied in your request, we will now defer our decision to grant or deny your request for a fee waiver until we are able to determine whether the disclosure of any records responsive to your request is in the public interest, consistent with the application of 22 C.F.R. § 171.17.

Our published regulations regarding expedition, 22 C.F.R. § 171.12(b), require a specific showing of a compelling need. **Expedited processing is granted only in the following situations: (1) imminent threat to the life or physical safety of an individual; (2) urgently needed by an individual primarily engaged in disseminating information in order to inform the public concerning actual or**

alleged Federal Government activity and the information is urgently needed in that a particular value of the information would be lost if not disseminated quickly; (3) substantial humanitarian reasons; and (4) loss of substantial due process rights.

Your request does not meet any of the established criteria. Regrettably, I must advise that you have not provided adequate justification for expedition. However, you may be assured that we will make every effort to process your request in as timely a manner as possible. For your convenience, I have enclosed a copy of the Department's expeditious processing criteria.

If you wish to appeal the denial of expedition, you may write to the Chief, Requester Liaison Division, at the address below, within 30 days of receipt of this letter.

Unusual circumstances (including the number and location of Department components involved in responding to your request, the volume of requested records, etc.) may arise that would require additional time to process your request.

We will notify you as soon as responsive material has been retrieved and reviewed. Should you want to contact us, you may call our FOIA Requester Service Center at (202) 261-8484 or send an email to FOIAstatus@state.gov. Please refer to the Case Control Number in any communication.

Sincerely,



Mary Therese Casto
Chief, Requester Communications Branch

Fees: The Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) provides that agencies may assess fees to recover the direct costs of processing requests, unless a fee waiver has been granted.

According to our regulations, by making a FOIA request, you have agreed to pay all applicable fees up to \$25 unless a fee waiver has been granted. You may specify a willingness to pay a greater amount. If the estimated fees exceed this limit, you will be notified.

____ You have stated your willingness to pay the fees incurred in the processing of this request up to \$_____.

☒ Please let us know if you are willing to pay the fees that will be incurred in the processing of your request. You may set a limit of the maximum amount that you wish to pay. Please be advised that, without an agreement to pay fees, your request will be processed without cost up to the required first 2 hours of search time (for all other requester category only) and duplication of the first 100 pages (for all other, media, educational and non-commercial scientific requester categories).

Based upon the information that you have provided, we have placed you in the requester category checked below. This request will be processed in accordance with the fee schedule designated for that category (see 22 C.F.R. 171, enclosed).

____ **Commercial Use Requesters** – Charges may be assessed that recover the full direct costs of searching for, reviewing for release, and duplicating the record(s) sought.

____ **Educational Institution Requesters** – Charges may be assessed that recover the cost of duplicating the record(s) sought only, after the first 100 pages of duplication.

____ **Non-commercial Scientific Institution Requesters** – Charges may be assessed that recover the cost of duplicating the record(s) sought only, after the first 100 pages of duplication.

☒ **Representatives of the News Media** – Charges may be assessed that recover the cost of duplicating the record(s) sought only, after the first 100 pages of duplication.

____ **All Other Requesters** – Charges may be assessed that recover the full reasonable direct cost of searching for and duplicating the record(s) sought, after the first 100 pages of duplication, and the first two hours of search time.

____ You have indicated your inclusion in a category different than the one indicated above. Please forward the information requested on the enclosed sheet titled "Requester Categories" to substantiate your inclusion in a particular category of requester.

We will notify you of the costs incurred in processing your request as soon as the search for, and review of, any responsive documents have been completed.

Expedited Processing Information Sheet

Expedited processing shall be granted to a requester after the requester requests such and demonstrates a compelling need for the information. A compelling need is deemed to exist where the requester can demonstrate one of the following:

1. **A Compelling Need** means that the failure to obtain the records on an expedited basis could reasonably be expected to pose an imminent threat to the life or physical safety of an individual.
2. **A Compelling Need** means that the information is urgently needed by an individual primarily engaged in disseminating information in order to inform the public concerning actual or alleged Federal Government activity. An individual primarily engaged in disseminating information to the public. Representatives of the news media would normally qualify; however, other persons must demonstrate that their primary activity involves publishing or otherwise disseminating information to the public, not just to a particular segment or group.
 - (a) **Urgently Needed** means that the information has a particular value that will be lost if not disseminated quickly. Ordinarily this means a breaking news story of historical interest only, or information sought for litigation or commercial activities would not qualify nor would a news media publication or broadcast deadline unrelated to the news breaking nature of the information.
 - (b) **Actual or Alleged Federal Government Activity.** The information concerns some actions taken, contemplated, or alleged by or about the Government of the United States, or one of its components or agencies, including the Congress.
3. **Substantial Due Process** rights of the requester would be impaired by the failure to process immediately; or
4. **Substantial Humanitarian** concerns would be harmed by the failure to process immediately.

A demonstration of compelling need by a requester shall be made by a statement certified by the requester to be true and correct to the best of their knowledge.